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## EDITORIAL

# Trends in Nanotechnology

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This special issue of *Nanotechnology* contains selected papers presented at the fourth 'Trends in Nanotechnology' (TNT2003) international conference, held in Salamanca (Spain), 15–19 September 2003.

In response to the growing awareness of the importance of nanotechnology, many conferences are being organized worldwide to discuss the latest advances. Among these, the conference series 'Trends in Nanotechnology' (Toledo, Spain, 2000; Segovia, Spain, 2001; Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2002) has become a key meeting in the nanotechnology field. It provides fresh ideas, brings together well-known speakers, and promotes a suitable environment for discussions, exchanging ideas, and enhancing scientific and personal relations among participants. TNT2003 was organized in a similar way to the three prior TNT conferences, in large part due to their overwhelming success. In 2003, more than 360 scientists from Europe, the United States, Japan and other countries attended this meeting and contributed with talks (76), posters (260) and stimulating discussions about their most recent research.

The aim of the conference was to focus on the applications of nanotechnology and to bring together, in a scientific forum, various worldwide groups belonging to industry and public institutions. TNT2003 was particularly effective at transmitting information and establishing contacts among workers in this field. Graduate students attending such conferences quickly learn the importance of interdisciplinary skills and become more effective in their future lines of research. Last year, almost 65 graduate students received a grant (from NASA, ONRIFO, PHANTOMS or TNT) to attend the conference and present their work through a poster (16 prizes to the best posters were awarded during this event). The scientific programme, without parallel sessions, covered a wide spectrum of nanotechnology research.

We would like to thank all the participants for their assistance as well as the authors for their written contributions. We are indebted to the following institutions, companies and government agencies for their help and financial support: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CMP Científica, University of Cambridge, University of Purdue, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Universidad de Salamanca, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Georgia Institute of Technology, Universidad SEK, IRC in Nanotechnology, PHANTOMS Network (EU funded through the IST programme), ONRIFO, NASA, NIMS (Nanomaterials Laboratory), Nanotechnology Research Institute, Fundetel, Parque Científico de Madrid, Ayuntamiento de Salamanca, Caja Duero, Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Motorola, World Scientific, WILEY-VCH, Institute of Physics Publishing and the Ministerio Español de Ciencia y Tecnología. We would also like to thank the following companies for their participation as exhibitors: NanoTec, Raith, Orsay Physics, SPECS, World Scientific and Institute of Physics Publishing.

We invite readers of this special issue of *Nanotechnology* to join us at the next 'Trends in Nanotechnology' conference. TNT2004 will be held in Segovia (Spain), 13–17 September 2004.



**Figure.** TNT 2003 participants in Salamanca (Spain), 15–19 September 2003.